

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2636

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FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO BOMBAY AND MADRAS FROM
CALCUTTA JULY 12, 1974 REPEATED TO YOU. QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CALCUTTA 1428

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJ: CONGRESS (O) AICC SESSION 1974

1. SUMMARY. AFTER AN INTERESTING DISCUSSION WITH WBPCC(O)
PRESIDENT CHUNDER JULY 10 WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE
MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION EMERGING FROM THE JUNE 15-16 CALCUTTA
SESSION IS WHETHER THERE WILL BE A 1975 SESSION. THE PARTY AS
A SEMI-DISCIPLINED NATIONAL UNIT, IN THE CONGRESS STYLE,
HAS APPARENTLY CEASED TO FUNCTION. STATE UNITS IN TAMILNADU,
KARNATAKA, GUJARAT AND BIHAR ARE CONSIDERED VIABLE BUT WILL
CONTINUE TO FUNCTION INDEPENDENT OF GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE
FROM THE NATIONAL PARTY. END SUMMARY.

2. CHUNDER INSISTED ON CHARACTERIZING THE SESSION AS A
"SUCCESS" NOTING THAT THE PEOPLE ARE "INCREASINGLY WITH US."
ALMOST EVERYTHING HE TOLD US BELIED THAT RITUAL STATEMENT,
HOWEVER.

3. THE TWO IMPORTANT POLITICAL QUESTIONS WHICH AROSE DURING
THE SESSION, AND WHICH WERE REPORTED FULLY IN THE PRESS,
WERE: (A) THE TAMILNADU PCC'S (READ: KAMARAJ'S) DECISION
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TO CONTINUE ITS WORKING ALLIANCE WITH THE CONGRESS(R) IN

THAT STATE AND, (B) THE UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE THE BIHAR ASSEMBLY MEMBERS TO RESIGN THEIR SEATS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PARTY'S POLICY DECISION TO SUPPORT THE JAYA PRAKASH NARAYAN-LED MOVEMENT TO DISSOLVE THE ASSEMBLY. THERE HAS BEEN MUCH TOING AND FROING ON BOTH QUESTIONS BUT IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE STATE PARTY UNITS HAVE MADE ASSESSMENTS OF THE LOCAL POLITICAL SITUATION AT WIDE VARIANCE FROM THAT OF THE NATIONAL PARTY AND THE STATE UNITS ARE NOT AMENABLE TO DISCIPLINE.

4. AS TO THE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE REUNIFICATION OF THE TWO CONGRESS PARTIES, I.E., THE CONGRESS (O) REJOINING CONGRESS (R), CHUNDER SAID THAT WHILE SOME INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS ARE TAKING THIS ROUTE (MRS. TARKESWARI SINHA, NAWAL KISHORE AND OTHERS), MOST LEADERS, IMPORTANTLY INCLUDING KAMARAJ, WILL NOT DO SO INDIVIDUALLY IN TH ABSENCE OF AN "OVERALL SETTLEMENT". AT PRESENT THERE ARE NO NEGOTIATIONS GOING ON FOR SUCH A SETTLEMENT, HE INSISTED.

5. THE AICC DEPUTED FORMER WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER P.C. SEN TO VISIT KAMARAJ IN MADRAS TO DISCUSS PARTY MATTERS WITH HIM. SEN HAS NOW DONE SO AND WILL BE RETURNING TO CALCUTTA IN A FEW DAYS. CHUNDER SAID HIS UNDERSTANDING OF KAMARAJ'S POSITION IS THAT HE WILL NOT DROP OUT OF CONGRESS (O) BUT NEITHER WILL HE ALLOW IT TO STAND IN HIS WAY OF COMBATTING THE SECESSIONIST FORCES IN TAMILNADU, I.E., THE DMK AND THE ADMK. AS FOR BIHAR, FORMER UNION DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DEASAI WENT TO PATNA AFTER THE SESSION TO CONVINCE THE FAIRLY SIZEABLE CONGRESS (O) LEGISLATIVE GROUP TO RESIGN. HIS MISSION WAS A TOTAL FAILURE. ONLY FOUR MLAS ARE READY TO RESIGN; THE OTHER TWENTY SIX ARE PREPARED TO LEAVE THE PARTY OVER THE ISSUE.

6. COMMENT:OUR STRONG IMPRESSION IS THAT WHILE SOME INDIVIDUALS WHO TODAY BEAR THE CONGRESS (O) LABEL MAY ONCE AGAIN PLAY IMPORTANT ROLES IN THE POLITICAL LIFE OF THE COUNTRY, THE PARTY AS SUCH WILL NOT.
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